RESPONSE UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.111
U.S. Appln. No.: 10/743,375

Attorney Docket No.: Q79111

REMARKS

Claims 1, 6, 10 and 18 are pending in the application and have been examined.

Claim Rejections

Claims 1 and 10 --- 35 U.S.C. § 102(e)

Claims 1 and 10 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Pat. No. 6,504,840 to Boström *et al.* ("Boström"). Applicant traverses this rejection.

Addressing claim 1, Boström does not disclose or suggest at least a sending device for converting higher-layer protocol data to continuous blocks of a fixed length, as recited in the claim. As disclosed by Boström, a sending end user 21 sends a data packet 210 comprising a 64-bit data block (data1) which identifies the relevant timeslot (slot5) to the user interface 15 for sending to the receiver (column 10, lines 42-46; Fig. 8). In other words, the data incoming to the sending unit from the user is already in the form for transmission. Therefore, the sending device does not convert higher-layer protocol data to continuous blocks of a fixed length as required by the claim.

Accordingly, since Boström fails to disclose or suggest all the claimed features, claim 1 is patentable over the cited reference. Claim 10 contains features similar to the features recited in claim 1 and is therefore patentable for similar reasons.

Further, Boström does not disclose or suggest at least one stage of relay devices for receiving said continuous blocks and said idle blocks, discarding these idle blocks and continuous blocks containing bit errors to extract only valid continuous blocks, and then inserting idle blocks between said valid continuous blocks, as recited in the claims.

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In rejecting the claims, the Examiner improperly combines the functions of Boström's switching (intermediate) node with an end-user serving node. As disclosed by Boström, with respect to Fig. 12, intermediate node N2 will map the content of the timeslots of the transmitted bitstream B1 into the fourth timeslot on bitstream B4 irrespective of whether or not it contains valid or non-valid data. See column 13, lines 13-50, and Fig. 12. On the other hand, as shown by Fig. 9 illustrating a node serving an end-user, an idle slot detector 390 determines if the read data 405 contains an idle data block, and if so the data is simply ignored and not passed on to the end-user (column 11, lines 24-53). Thus, Boström's intermediate node which relays data does not receive said continuous blocks and said idle blocks, discarding these idle blocks and continuous blocks containing bit errors, as recited in the claims.

Claims 1 and 10 are patentable for at least these additional reasons.

Claims 6 and 18 --- 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 6 and 18 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Boström. Applicant traverses this rejection.

Claims 6 and 18 contain features similar to the features recited in claim 1. Therefore, the arguments set forth above for claims 1 and 10 are also applicable to claims 6 and 18. Accordingly, claims 6 and 18 are patentable over Boström for reasons similar to the reasons claims 1 and 10 are patentable over Boström.

Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the

Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is

kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

     The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue

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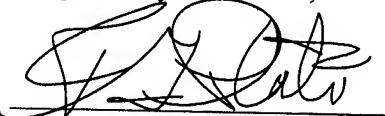
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